Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson will meet with Pope Leo XIV in Rome, office confirms

By CBS Chicago Team

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Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson will be flying to Rome later in May to meet with Pope Leo XIV, his office confirmed.

The mayor's office said Johnson will travel to Rome and Vatican City from May 26 to May 30, but did not specify when he is set to meet with the pope. The trip will be funded by World Business Chicago, a nonprofit economic development agency funded by the city and private donors.

"I'm just elated that the Pope is from Chicago. I think we're going to talk about the values we share — protecting voting rights, protecting immigrant rights, and protecting workers' rights. He's been very clear and consistent on those issues, and I'm looking forward to that conversation," Johnson said in a statement.

Johnson proudly celebrated the selection of Pope Leo XIV – who was born Robert Prevost and raised on the South Side of Chicago and in south suburban Dolton – when he was first selected to lead the Catholic church, tweeting out, "Everything dope, including the pope, comes from Chicago!"

The mayor has been talking about a possible visit to Rome since.

In April, a coalition of Illinois public officials that comprises the Illinois Municipal League, including the mayors of Champaign, Normal, Peoria, Decatur, and the village president of La Grange Park, traveled to Italy for a private papal audience in what they called the Illinois Mayors Public Diplomacy Mission, which focused on international engagement, cultural exchange, and diplomacy.